

# The Melford Rural District,

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK.

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1909.

(Pursuant to the Regulations of the Local Government Board and of the West Suffolk County Council.)

Population (1891) 14456 ; (1901) 13121. Area 49765 acres. Number of persons per acre, 0.27.

Number of parishes, 22. Number of Inhabited Houses, 3149. Number of persons per house, 4.6.

Geological formation, chalk, covered on the higher ground with boulder clay, and in the valleys with drift sand and gravel or brick earth.

The following vital statistics have been compiled from the monthly returns sent to me from the different Registrars in the District :—

I. THE BIRTHS. The number of births registered during the year was 254, equivalent to a birth-rate of 19.5 per 1000 of the population. The births and birth-rates in this District during the previous seven years were :—

	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Births .....	288	278	271	253	272	267	260	254
Birth-rate	21.8	21.2	20.6	19.3	20.7	20.3	19.8	19.5

These figures show that the declining tendency in the birth-rate still continues.

The Birth-rate for 1909 in Rural England and Wales was 25.6

II. THE DEATHS. The number of deaths from all causes registered in the District during the year was 140, to which have to be added the deaths of 18 persons in the Sudbury Workhouse, of 6 persons in St. Leonards's Hospital, and of 1 in Colchester Hospital, who belonged to various parishes in the District. There have to be deducted 5 deaths of non-residents in the Sanatorium at Nayland. This making the total nett deaths to be 160, equivalent to a death-rate of 12.3 per 1000 of the population, one of the lowest death-rates recorded in the District. For the previous seven years they were as follows :—

	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Deaths registered .....	190	161	176	184	168	163	178	140
Deaths belonging to the District	206	174	189	198	182	185	200	160
Death-rate .....	15.7	13.2	14.4	15.0	13.9	14.4	15.2	12.3

The Death-rate for 1909 in Rural England and Wales was 13.6

The following table shows the relative age mortality during the year :—

Deaths—						
Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 65 years.	over 65 years.	
12	3	5	7	42	91	

More than half of the deaths registered were of persons over the age of 65, and of these 37 were of the age of 80 and upwards.

III. *Infantile Mortality.* The deaths registered of children under one year of age, numbered 12. This is the lowest yet recorded in the District, and 5 of these were unfortunately due to premature birth. The practical instructions given to mothers by the District or Maternity Nurses, on the proper care and feeding of infants, is doing much, in several of the parishes, to improve the health of infants, and to reduce the infantile death-rate, which to some extent must counterbalance the decline in the birth-rate. The infantile mortality for the previous seven years was as follows :—

	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Deaths of children under one year	30	22	29	18	21	16	17	12
Rate per 1000 of births registered	89.2	79.1	107.0	71.2	77.2	60.0	65.3	47.2

The Infant Mortality for 1909 in Rural England and Wales was 98

*The Notification of Births Act, 1907, is not in operation in the District.*

IV. *Deaths from Zymotic Diseases.* None occurred during the year.

For the previous seven years the zymotic death-rate per 1000 was as follows :—

1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
1.0	0.5	0.3	0.2	1.2	0.3	0.6	0

The Zymotic Death Rate for 1909 in Rural England and Wales was 0.8

V. *Deaths from Tuberculosis.* This disease in its various forms caused 14 deaths; of these 11 were pulmonary and occurred in six of the parishes. In each of these cases prompt notification thereof was received from the Registrar, so that immediately after the funeral disinfection of rooms, bedding, and clothes was carried out.

VI. *Deaths from other causes.* These included 11 deaths from Cancer, from Bronchitis and Pneumonia 19, Heart Diseases 15, Accidents 7.

VII. *THE NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.* The number of cases notified in the District was 68, and consisted of Scarlet Fever 59, Diphtheria 2, Erysipelas 5, Enteric Fever 1, and Puerperal Fever 1. The notifications for the past seven years were as follows:—

	Smallpox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diph- theria.	Croup.	Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Total cases.	Per thousand population.
1902	0	16	5	0	1	1	8 ch. pox 2	33	2.5
1903	0	24	6	0	0	0	9	41	3.1
1904	0	149	7	0	0	0	9	165	12.5
1905	0	87	4	4	0	2	13	110	8.2
1906	0	54	2	1	0	1	11	69	5.2
1907	0	32	8	0	1	0	8	49	3.7
1908	0	38	13	0	0	0	8	59	4.5
1909	0	59	2	0	1	1	5	68	5.2

The following are particulars of the occurrence of these diseases and other zymotics not notifiable:—

*Scarlet Fever.* The only parish in which this disease was at all prevalent was that of Cavendish. Out of the 59 cases notified during the year, 46 occurred in this parish, principally among school children, and affected 28 families. As a consequence and at different times of the year the two elementary schools had to be closed temporarily, and at the same time were cleansed and disinfected. In seven other parishes 13 cases occurred in seven families, and did not spread beyond the one family in each parish affected. Unfortunately, two of the cases occurred in the schoolmaster's house in Great Cornard, and as his family supplied three of the teachers to the school, this had to be closed a fortnight before the summer holidays. The general type of the disease this year was very mild, in fact so mild that in the early stage some cases escaped recognition, and were accountable for spreading the disease.

The isolation of the patient and family were so far as practical carried out. Disinfectants and eucalyptus oil supplied with printed instructions, and in due course the houses, clothes, &c., were disinfected with formalin lamp and spray.

*Diphtheria.* The two cases notified occurred in different parishes and had no connection. Both were of a mild type. Inspection could discover no sanitary defects on the premises, nor anything to account for the disease occurring.

*Typhoid Fever.* The one case notified was the schoolmaster at the Church School, Cavendish. Inspection of his house showed a privy vault and drain suspiciously close to the well, and the analysis of the water discovered traces of recent sewage. The drains which were defective were relaid and the well closed. A new well is being sunk.

*Puerperal Fever.* The one case which occurred was not very serious. A woman eleven days after confinement got up and went out into back yard, and so got a chill which laid her up for several days.

*Zymotics not notifiable.* The district during the year has been most remarkably free of all these diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, &c.

*Phthisis.* The Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulation, 1908, which came into operation last year, brings all the cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, occurring in connection with the Poor Law, under sanitary control. Notification was received of four cases. These have been inspected and printed instructions given.

VIII. *WATER SUPPLY.* The rainfall during the year as registered by Commander Neate at Little Waldingfield was 26.44 inches. This is much above the average; for 1908 it was 20.95. All the wells and ponds in the district maintained a more than normal supply. There were seven new private wells sunk, two of which were for new houses, for which certificates were granted. There were 28 samples of water taken and analysed; of these seven were found to be impure, and with two exceptions all have had the wells cleaned and deepened and so improved the supply; two having new tube wells sunk.

In the parish of Stanstead the conversion of a private well into a public one was pending arrangement at the end of last year. This was satisfactorily settled, so that the upper part of the village has now a good public supply.

The District altogether is well supplied with water, having 22 public supplies and numerous private wells.

IX. *SEWERS AND DRAINS.* The privy cesspool and pail systems are the general mode of dealing with excremental matter and their disposal on garden or allotment ground, the sewers and drains being only used for slop and storm water. In the parish of Cavendish a new 12-inch sewer was laid down for 200 yards, receiving half the drainage of the village, and so diverting it from a ditch, which was a frequent nuisance. This sanitary improvement was done at a cost of £78. Connections have been made and a flushing sluice fixed.

In Nayland, Bures and Melford defective sewers were relaid and repaired. In Cavendish one and in Melford three sewage ditches were cleaned out. There were 20 new privies erected and 73 repaired during the year.



X. HOUSES. Five new houses were erected and inspected, four of which were cottages for working class. Four delapidated houses were demolished and one closed. Nine cases of over-crowding were abated by reducing the number of occupiers. One filthy house in Hartest was put into a sanitary condition. Forty-two houses were disinfected, also three school houses, all owing to infection from scarlet fever.

The house accommodation for the working classes is generally good, with sufficient open spaces. Nearly all have garden ground or else allotment ground.

There are no new building Bye-laws in force, nor has any action been taken under the Working Classes Act.

XI. SCHOOLS. Inspection of all the 22 schools in the District has been made, with respect to their sanitary condition. In 4 instances defects were reported to the Managers, which were remedied. All the schools have an available supply of water, though not always on the premises, and have play grounds. The action taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases is, with regard to Scarlet Fever, exclusion of all children from the infected houses, and sometimes from infected areas, examination of children in school for signs of desquamation, particularly those who have lately been absent. With regard to Measles, exclusion of affected child, also of any younger ones in the family, not of elder ones who have had Measles. The medical inspection of school children is done by a whole time Inspector.

XII. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. The Factories in the district number three, viz., Long Melford, one hair weaving and one mat making; in Gt. Cornard, one mat making. The Workshops number 35. Both the factories and workshops have all been inspected, and have sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences; where persons of both sexes are employed separate accommodation is provided, in accordance with section 22 of Public Health (Amendment) Act, 1890. This latter accommodation has been improved, owing to having received three notices from H.M. Inspector of Factories (Lady) which were at once attended to.

*Report on Anthrax.* In my reports for the last three years special reference has been made to the frequent occurrence of anthrax among the employers in Messrs. Lewisohn & Co. workshop in Long Melford, where foreign and raw horsehair is washed and hackled. In April 1908, with the sanction of the Home Office, there was substituted for the Anthrax order of that date, a plan which I considered more adapted for dealing with the cause of the constant occurrence of Anthrax in this workshop. I am glad to be able to report its marked success, as since its introduction not a single case of Anthrax has occurred among the 70 workers.

The process was simply that of preventing all possibility of horsehair dust flying about, by immersing each bale, just as received, into a large tank of water at 70 to 75 degrees containing 1 per cent of Cyllin. When thus immersed, and not till then, the bale is ripped open and the contents scattered in the tank, where they remain soaking for at least 1½ hours, before being handled.

BAKE-HOUSES. These number 30. Inspection was made, and all were found to be kept in good sanitary condition, only in three cases was it required to have further lime-washing of walls. There are no underground bake-houses.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES. These number 20, and are frequently inspected, their sanitary condition is generally satisfactory. In two cases concrete floors and new drains were necessary to be laid down.

OFFENSIVE TRADES. Consist of two Knackers' yards and two Gut works, which are kept free of nuisance.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS. There are 39 on the register and all have been frequently inspected. There is no doubt that greater attention is being given to cleanliness in Cowsheds and in the milking of Cows. In 5 cases improved flooring and ventilation were pointed out as necessary, and these improvements were effected. There are four large cowkeepers who send most of their milk to London, passing it through preliminary strainers and refrigerators. All cows in the district are grass grazed. The Model Regulations of 1905, with a few alterations are in force. The systematic inspection of cows for tuberculosis is such an important health measure, that its adoption I hope will soon be general.

GENERAL SANITATION. Systematic as well as special inspections have been made throughout the district, and the house-to-house inspection is now complete in nine parishes. Annexed is a tabular statement of the sanitary work done in each parish during the year, by the Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. G. F. Rampling, whom I consider to have carried out his many official duties with great diligence and tact.

No legal proceedings were necessary this year.

Tabular statistics, according to the forms supplied by the Local Government Board, of the sickness, mortality, &c., within the district, are appended to the official reports.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

# SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1909.

	Acton	Alpheton	Assington	Boxed	Bures St. Mary	St. Bartholomew	Cavendish	Chilton	Gt Cornard	Lt. Cornard	Hartest	Hawkedon	Lawshall	Leavenheath	Melford	Nayland with Wissington	Newton	Shimpling	Somerton	Stoke-by-Nayland	Stanstead	Gt. Waldingfield	Lt. Waldingfield	TOTAL
Complaints Received .....					1		2	1		1	...				6	1	1			1	1			15
Nuisances Detected .....	9	3	4	2	11		9	3	6	5	8	3	9	9	16	14	7	3	1	8	5	3	4	142
Nuisances abated by Notice served .....					1		...			1	1	1	2	1		1			1					7
Nuisances abated without Notice .....	9	3	4	2	10		9	3	6	5	7	3	8	9	14	13	7	3	1	7	5	3	4	135
Slaughter-Houses Inspected Dairies and Cow sheds			2	...	2		4	...	...	2	...	1			4	3				1	...	1		20
Inspected .....	2	1	1	1	2		2	1	1	1	2	...	1		6	5	1	2	...	4	3	2	1	39
Houses Newly Erected .....							1	...	...	...	...	...			4	...					...	...		5
Schools Inspected.....	1	1	1	...	1		2	...	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	...	1	1	1	1	22
Schools Disinfected .....							2	...	1	...	...	...			...	...								3
Houses Disinfected .....					1		27	1	1	1	...			1	3	1	2	...			1	1	2	42
Houses Reported Unfit for Habitation .....							...	...	...	...	...	...												
Houses Pulled Down .....							1	1	...	...	...	...			2									4
Houses Closed .....							1	...	...	...	...	...												1
Filthy Houses Cleansed .....							...	...	...	1	...	...												1
Houses Overcrowded Abated							2	...	...	...	...	1			4		1	...	1					9
Wells (New) .....								1	...	...	1				2	2					1			7
Wells (Cleaned out, Deepened &c.) .....	1	...	1	...			1	1	1	1	...			2	1		1	...			1	1		12
Samples of Water taken for analysis .....					3	1	5	1	3	1	1		1		4	2	1	...		...	1	4		28
Privies (New) .....		1	...		1		6	...	1	...	1		2		3	3				...	2			20
Privies (Repaired) .....	3	1	2	1	5		3	2	1	2	5	2	11	2	10	6	3	4		5	2	1	2	73
Sewers (Relaid, Repaired, &c)					1		1	...	...	...	...	...			1	1				...	...	...		4
Sink Pipes Disconnected.....							3	...	...	...	...	5	2		2	2	3	...	1	1	1	1		19
Drains (New) .....							1	1	...	...	...	1			3	2				1		1	1	11
Drains (Improved) .....	1						1	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	...	1	1		14
Ditches Cleaned out.....							1	...	...	...	...	...			3									4
Animals improperly kept (Removed) .....					1			...	...	...	...	...				1				1	...			3
Offensive Accumulations Removed .....	1	1	1	1	3		2	1	2	3	4	1	2	4	4	2	1	1		1	2	1	2	40
Bake-houses Inspected .....			1	...	3		3	...	1	1	3	...	1	1	8	3	1	...		1	1	1	1	30
Workshops Inspected .....	1	1	...		3		6	...	2		2	...	2		12	3	1	1		...	1			35
Outworkers Visited .....	7	3	...		3			...			...	...	6	8	26	14				2	...			69
Dairies and Cow sheds Repaired .....					1		1	...			...	...			1	2								5
House-to-house Inspection ...	25	...	...	19	...		...	20			...	37	39				33			45	68	32	52	370

GEORGE F. RAMPLING, A. R. San. I.

Inspector of Nuisances.